



## Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://feedthefuture.gov/article/filling-bellies-hungry-kids>

## Filling the Bellies of Hungry Kids

Growing up as the kid of a car mechanic who worked on flat-rate, we did not have much money. On weeks my dad didn't turn many hours, we survived on generic macaroni and powdered cheese (4 for \$1!) and if we were lucky there was a can of tuna fish to mix in. While that might not have been the most nutritious dinner, I never went to bed hungry. I never went to bed with the gnawing of hunger pains from deep within.

But, millions of children are going to bed hungry around the world.

There are children who have that gnawing hunger pains every single day of their lives.

Hungry children can't concentrate at school. They don't care about math and science... they just want food in their bellies.

One hundred and sixty-five million children under 5 are under nourished. Poor [nutrition](#) can affect a child's health and learning ability. Poor nutrition in the first 1,000 days of a child's life—from pregnancy to their second birthday—can cause irreversible growth and mental issues. From hunger.

Through USAID and the [Feed the Future](#) program, investments are being made in agriculture, health and social protection. Programs like encouraging the growth of orange maize in Zambia, assisting in food security in Guatemala for women and children and other programs are helping teach women how to provide healthier food for themselves and their families.

These aren't handouts, folks. These are programs to encourage the women of these countries to help themselves. They are given the information and training to grow better crops and to get the food from the plants to the table without any issues. They are being given the potential to succeed. They are being given the knowledge to fill their children's empty bellies.

Feed the Future is helping women and their families rise above poverty and under nutrition and provide for themselves and their families. These children are being given the chance to succeed at school and in life—because of better nutrition. Last year, they were able to reach 12 million children. Twelve million children went to bed with full tummies because of USAID and Feed the Future.

Whether you love or hate the United States government... you have to be amazed at Feed the Future. The initiative, led by USAID, is comprised of eight other governmental agencies all working together to help others. They are Feeding the Future.

Recently, I saw a sign that said "Childhood shouldn't hurt." Childhood shouldn't hurt- this includes hunger pains. A child should be given every opportunity to succeed. Thankfully, programs like Feed the Future are giving them that opportunity.

I encourage you to check out Feed the Future's [website](#) to learn more.

*About the author: Julia Gibson is the mom of boy/girl twins, wife, accountant, scrapbooker, card maker, and nap sneaker. Relatively new to the blogging scene, she recently became involved with social good and is proud to be a member of the Global Team of 200, part of [Mom Bloggers for Social Good](#). You can read more of her blog posts at [Mom on the Run x2](#).*

*This post originally [appeared](#) on the USAID blog.*